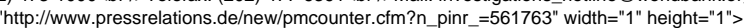




Bulgaria Appoints World Bank to Advise on Water and Sanitation Strategy Implementation

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The Bulgarian Government today signed an agreement with the World Bank for the delivery of analytical and advisory services in support of the implementation of the countrys Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy 2014-2023, which was approved by the Government on April 2nd. Todays agreement was signed by Minister of Regional Development Desislava Terzieva and Markus Repnik, World Bank Country Manager for Bulgaria, Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Since 2013, the World Bank has supported the Government in the development of the Strategy, which aims to enable affordable sustainable water supply and sanitation services to consumers. Under the new agreement, the World Bank will strengthen the capacity of the State Energy and Water Regulatory Commission. It will also support government compliance with EU urban wastewater regulations, while avoiding excessive costs. According to the Strategy, EU funds will finance 30 to 40 percent of the total capital investment needs. The sector needs to find the rest to ensure compliance and sustainability of water supply and sanitation services. Cost-effective compliance is essential. The Bulgarian Government is committed to achieving its Accession Treaty obligations with respect to urban water. Our water companies are essential in ensuring that we meet the obligations at the least cost to consumers. A strong and responsive regulator, which balances the legitimate interests of consumers and companies, is another essential building block. We look forward to World Bank support in both these areas, said Minister of Regional Development Desislava Terzieva. The World Bank is honored to be appointed by the Government to provide support in the implementation of the Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy. Drawing on European and global experience, we can promote solutions in support of sustainable water supply and sanitation services that are affordable to consumers. This fits well with the World Banks vision of shared prosperity, said Markus Repnik, World Bank Country Manager for Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Slovakia. The service agreement is developed under the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Bulgaria and the World Bank on partnership and support in the implementation of the EU Structural Instruments, signed in 2012. The MoU set the scene for Bulgarias unique knowledge partnership with the World Bank Group, as it includes a mechanism that allows the Government to draw on EU Funds to cover the costs of knowledge and advisory services provided from international financial institutions (IFIs). The World Bank 1818 H Street, NW DC 20433 Washington USA
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